



**Testimony
Elizabeth Gara
Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)
Before the Environment Committee
Public Hearing
February 19, 2014**

CWWA supports SB-70, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF LANDS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

CWWA has long supported efforts to protect Connecticut's water supply watershed and aquifer lands by preserving these lands as open space. Connecticut has made tremendous progress in protecting the state's open space lands due to programs like the Open Space and Watershed Acquisition program and the tax credit program for the donation of open space land at discount prices.

These programs provide powerful incentives to water utilities and municipalities to acquire and preserve open space lands to help protect Connecticut's ecological habitats, its natural beauty and its outdoor recreational areas.

SB-70 enhances these efforts by helping to provide permanent protection of state owned lands with high conservation value, including those within water supply watersheds and aquifers. This will be very significant for long-term source water protection which is vital to the state's public health and safety.

CWWA urges your support for SB-70.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of private, regional and municipal water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut. As purveyors of public water supplies, our members have an obligation to provide sufficient quantities of high-quality water at a reasonable cost to consumers of the communities served.